

Over the course of his career, Al helped fulfill President Abraham Lincoln's promise "to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan." While the V.A. loses a valued member of its team with Al's retirement, his impact on our nation's veterans will be felt for years.

I ask my colleagues to join me today in commending the career of Mr. Albert B. Washko as he begins his well-deserved retirement.

RECOGNIZING THE 2010–2011 CONGRESSIONAL YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR 500 HOURS OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY—DALLAS RODRIGUEZ

**HON. SAM JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 5, 2011*

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure and privilege to inform the Members of the United States House of Representatives that the students of the 2010–2011 Congressional Youth Advisory Council (CYAC) from the Third District of Texas have completed a total of 500 community service hours, fulfilling and far-surpassing the requirements of their assigned CYAC in the Community service project.

This year 46 students from public, private, and home schools in grades 10 through 12 made their voices heard by joining CYAC. As the Third District's young ambassadors to Congress, these bright high school students met with me on a quarterly basis to discuss current events and public policy. These impressive young people recognize an important truth: the heart of public service is found when giving back to the community. CYAC students volunteered their time and talents with over 30 organizations including Adopt-A-Highway, Habitat for Humanity, Meals on Wheels, Teen Court, and the USO, to name a few. As one student shared, "CYAC in the Community has allowed me to realize my calling to serve those in the U.S. Armed Forces." I am beyond thrilled that CYAC has helped students unleash their full potential and chase their dreams.

President George H.W. Bush once said, "A volunteer is a person who can see what others cannot see; who can feel what most do not feel. Often, such gifted persons do not think of themselves as volunteers, but as citizens—citizens in the fullest sense: partners in civilization."

With this statement as a benchmark, I am proud to congratulate the members of the 2010–2011 Congressional Youth Advisory Council for showing themselves to be outstanding young citizens of this nation. It is my privilege to submit summaries of their work to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD to be preserved for posterity and antiquity. To these young public servants, thank you, and keep up the great work. I salute you.

A copy of each submitted student summary follows:

For this project I wanted to focus specifically on what I could do in five hours to make a difference in my community. I decided to focus my CYAC community service

on helping The North Texas Food Bank with their current event called "The Souper Bowl of Caring". This event is done in conjunction with local grocery stores and allows shoppers to buy pre-packed bags of non-perishable food items to donate for distribution to the local food banks and shelters. I walked my neighborhood distributing flyers informing people about the event and solicited cash donations to help me pre-purchase bags for the event. I was able to collect enough money to buy 23 bags of groceries. Because I will volunteer for the event on Sunday, February 6th, several others I talked to promised to go in to Market Street and purchase bags on Sunday. This experience has shown me how much one person in a short amount of time can help several families survive for a couple of weeks. It confirmed to me that we can all make a difference in the lives of others by just taking a few hours out of our lives and focusing on helping others.

—Dallas Rodriguez

IRENE PARSONS SHATTERED MANY GLASS CEILINGS IN HER YEARS OF SERVICE

**HON. VIRGINIA FOXX**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 5, 2011*

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the late Irene Parsons, of Wilkes County, North Carolina, who passed away last week.

Parsons was a woman who knew a thing or two about shattering glass ceilings. After she graduated from the Women's College of the University of North Carolina in 1941, she then went on to graduate with the first class of the Women's Reserve of the Coast Guard, known as SPARS. She then served at the Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington.

After the war Parsons worked at the Veterans Administration. She was eventually appointed by President Johnson as director of personnel at the Veterans Administration. At the time, the VA was the second largest government agency with over 200,000 employees and Parsons was the only female director of personnel for a major government agency.

Later, in 1972, Parsons was honored with a Career Service Award from President Nixon for her many years of service to our nation. She was also the first woman to receive the VA's coveted Silver Helmet award. Parson's also received the Federal Women's Award during her service in the federal government.

After retirement from government service she returned to her home in Wilkes County where she remained very active in the community. Irene Parsons made many strides for women during a time in which men still filled most leadership roles in government and business. Her life is an inspiring example for today's generation of young female leaders. She will be greatly missed and my thoughts and prayers are with her family and loved ones who mourn this great loss.

PROTECTING OUR SENIORS

**HON. NICK J. RAHALL II**

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 5, 2011*

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, Social Security and Medicare bring economic security within

reach of working American families, regardless of income. Workers deserve the benefits they are owed after a lifetime of paying into these programs.

And, yet, there are some, driven by blind ideology and partisanship, who aim to chip away at those guarantees, bit by bit. There are budget proposals—reducing the operating expenses for the Social Security program, and curtailing the ability of Social Security to pay benefits—that hint of a radical restructuring of the program. There are budget proposals that are unabashed in their radicalism toward Medicare.

In the name of fixing deficits in other areas of the budget, some will try to point fingers at seniors programs as the culprit, but don't you believe it. We must be extremely cautious and jealous in protecting Social Security and Medicare, or we may find that they will be taken away forever.

DENNIS MANN WILL BE MISSED

**HON. BARNEY FRANK**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 5, 2011*

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, April 8th, the Town of Sharon and many others will be honoring Dennis Mann on the occasion of his retirement as the Fire Chief of Sharon, Massachusetts. Sharon is a town very well represented in this body—it has been, since 1982, in the district I am privileged to represent, and it is the hometown of my colleague from Massachusetts, Mr. KEATING, who served Sharon as a State Representative and State Senator before moving on to become the District Attorney for the county in which it is located and, most recently, our colleague here in the House.

Mr. Speaker, Dennis Mann exemplifies public service at its best, and at a time when too many people are prone to denigrate public servants, I am very proud to hold him up as an example of the kind of dedication, integrity, and commitment from which the public benefits. Dennis Mann has been a member of the Sharon Fire Department for over 30 years, and he was Chief for 13. In addition to the difficult job of running a fire department, with all that that entails, Dennis Mann's commitment to others has led him to teach CPR and also serve as an instructor in karate.

Mr. Speaker, we are as a society very lucky to have people who are prepared to risk their lives in the fire service, one of the most dangerous occupations in the world, and we too often take for granted the safety that they provide for us. I very much regret that there are those who would deny them the resources we need—and I say we and not they—for them to do their job on our behalf.

Mr. Speaker, to Dennis Mann, his wife Kathy, and their children Jamie and Carissa, I send my very best wishes; my congratulations on a job well done; and gratitude for the example Mr. Mann has set for public service at its best.